

RCI-4 - Green Power Purchasing

Benefit/Cost of Reducing CO₂e:

New Mexico: 2.3 MMt between 2007-2020; 0.1% of 2020 emissions; \$7/ton

Colorado: Low reduction potential; Medium cost

N. Carolina: 2 MMt between 2007-2020; 0.1% of 2020 emissions; \$3/ton

Assessment: Medium Priority. Bin A. 16 out of 22 votes.

The GHG emissions reductions associated with green power purchasing are modest, these programs are being implemented by some of the state's utilities and are well-accepted by the public and business community.

Programs to promote the purchase of green power could include:

- Education to increase the level of consumer awareness of renewable energy benefits and options;
- Requiring utilities to provide information on fuel sources and their emissions to consumers;
- The formation of large customer buying groups or aggregation;
- The verification of the claims regarding a green energy product in order to protect the consumer; and
- States agencies can purchase green power to meet their own needs thus helping to form the renewable market

Green power offers customers the opportunity to buy electricity generated from sources that emit no CO₂. Typical examples include non-emitting nuclear generation, large hydroelectric facilities, and renewable resources such as wind, geothermal, biomass, and small hydro.⁸

EPA defines green power as those renewable energy sources with the highest environmental benefits, including solar, wind, geothermal, biogas, biomass, and low-impact hydroelectric.⁹

Green-e, a leading independent certification and verification program for renewable energy, has developed a national standard for the certification of renewable energy.¹⁰

⁸ See http://www.pge.com/about_us/environment/features/clean_energy.html.

⁹ See www.epa.gov/greenpower/whatis/index.htm.

¹⁰ See http://www.green-e.org/docs/Appendix_D-Green-e_National_Standard.pdf.

Rocky Mountain Power currently offers this option to its customers through its Blue Sky program. Blue Sky is sold in increments; each 100 KWh block represents about 10 percent of the average customer's monthly electricity usage. Payments go directly toward the purchase of renewable energy and renewable energy credits. Over 20,000 customers are currently participating.